NOW IT'S PATIENCE POKER

A ROUND GAME WITHOUT THE ELEMENT OF GAMBLING.

The National Game Modified on the Other Side of the Pond—Any Number of Players Can Take Part—How It Is Played—Several Systems of Counting.

Some genius on the other side of the pond has evolved a game which has a future before it, as it is likely to become the rage among those who do not care to play cards for money. It might be called poker without a pot, but is perhaps more euphoniously named patience poker.

Patience poker is a round game, any number of players from two to 500 being eligible; in fact the only apparent limit is the seating capacity of the room and the available packs of cards. Each player must have a complete pack of his own and will require sufficient space upon the table to lay out twenty-five cards in the form of a square, five cards to a side.

One of the players is selected by choice or by cutting as the caller for the first deal. He shuffles his pack and presents it to be cut. In the meantime each of the others sorts his individual pack into sequence and suit so as to be able to pick out any named card without unnecessary delay.

The caller holds his own pack in his left hand, face down, and starts the game by taking off the top card and turning it face up on the table, at the same time distinctly naming its rank and suit, as "king of clubs." This makes it unnecessary for the other players to watch the cards drawn.

The others, all holding their packs face up, pick out the king of clubs and place it on the table in front of them, and this card forms the starter for each tableau or square. The caller then takes another card from the top of his shuffled pack and announces it, "ten of diamonds." Each of the other players picks out the ten of diamonds and adds it to his tableau.

Every card laid down must touch some other card that has previously been laid down. It may be placed beside it; above it or below it, or diagonally, touching one of the corners. There are eight available positions for the ten of diamonds in juxtaposition to the king of clubs, and each individual player, including the caller, may place it according to his fancy.

Card after card is withdrawn from the caller's pack, announced and placed, until twenty-five have been laid out. In forming the tableau there must not be more than five cards in a line either horizontally or vertically so that when the tableau is complete it shall present a series of five poker hands reading right and left, and five more hands reading up and down.

Reasonable time must be given by the caller for the placing of each card as called, and he must not turn up any card from his own shuffled pack until the card previously called has been placed by every other player; because cards once placed cannot be changed under any circumstances after the following card has been turned up, even if it has not yet been named. This rule is important.

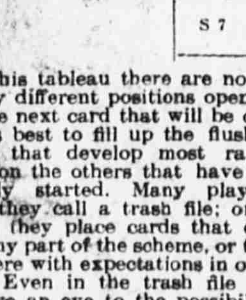
The object in placing the cards is to make these horizontal and vertical lines of five cards each into good poker hands, and the trick is to get as many of the more valuable poker hands as possible. One straight flush is better than five or six hands with three of a kind in each.

As each card counts double, vertically and horizontally, it is easy to see that it would be possible to make a tableau containing five hands, each being four of a kind. Suppose these five were four aces and the nine of clubs, four kings and the eight of clubs, four queens and the seven of clubs, four jacks and the six of clubs, four tens and the five of clubs, reading vertically for the fours. The same cards if arranged in suits horizontally would make five straight flushes, of which four would be royal flushes, ace high. This would give ten of the highest hands in the game in one tableau.

But as the players are not allowed to arrange their cards after the twenty-five have been drawn, but must determine the permanent position of each one as it is called, the skill consists in anticipating the possibilities that certain cards will be drawn by the caller and so arranging the tableau that if the hoped for cards come out the most advantageous places will be found open for them.

With this object in view many players follow a system in their play, reserving certain files, vertically or horizontally, for certain suits, so as to get flushes, which are very common. Some prefer the vertical, some the horizontal, for the flush element, and stick to that order until each suit has to be abandoned for want of material or space for other cards. If we suppose the horizontal to be kept for flushes we have the vertical hands available for sequences, full hands and four of a kind.

As a rule it is bad policy if you have two or three cards of a possible straight flush in your tableau to let anything break into it. In order to get a large choice of position many players place their earlier cards diagonally, so as to get as many corner positions open as possible. This enables them to avoid lines that they wish to reserve in both directions. Suppose this to be the position selected for the first four cards that have been called:



In this tableau there are no less than twenty different positions open for placing the next card that will be called.

It is best to fill up the flushes or big hands that develop most rapidly and abandon the others that have been tentatively started. Many players keep what they call a trash file; one row in which they place cards that do not fit into any part of the scheme, or that would interfere with expectations in other quarters. Even in the trash file it is well to have an eye to the possibility of sequence, and not to put a five in a row that has court cards in it, when it might just as well be placed in a row containing nothing higher than a seven.

Opinions are divided as to whether it is better to play for the big hands only, making trash files of everything else, or to try for a number of lower value but more probable combinations. As almost half the pack is dealt out and the odds against getting any card or cards are only 27 to 25, the probability of making a straight flush of some kind is very great.

After the last of the twenty-five cards has been called and placed, each player in turn counts up the poker combinations that his tableau contains, beginning by reading from right to left for five hands, and then up and down for five more.

As the combinations are announced they are verified by the other players, and their counting value in points is added together, the total value of the tableau being put down to the credit of the player by the scorer on a sheet of paper ruled with a column for each name.

After all the tableaux have been added up and scored the player to the left of the last caller becomes the caller for the next deal, and all the others sort their cards into sequence and suit. The game is at an end when an agreed number of rounds have been played, or at the expiration of a specified time.

With regard to the values of the hands, it is obvious that the usual poker calculations are not of the slightest use because the conditions are not the same. In patience poker it is as easy to get a flush as a pair, and the only reason they are rated as more valuable than pairs is that one must break up other things to get the flush.

At present no particular scale of values seems to be universally agreed upon. Some take the nine standard poker hands and give to each the value of its number in this rank, a straight being worth 4 and a full hand 6, for instance. Such a rating spoils the game because the values of the big hands are not great enough to induce players to risk the loss of other combinations in order to get them. It is not at all uncommon to see a player hug his chances for two or three big hands only to find at the end that he has failed to get them, and has also failed to make any other combinations that are worth anything.

In the following table are given the nine standard poker hands. In the second column are given the values attached to these hands by some players in patience poker. There are other scales of value, but this seems easier to remember, as it advances by fives for four hands, and then by twenty-five. One popular scale is 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 15, 25, 50, 70. It must remain for some genius with a head for figures to calculate the probabilities of the hands in this game and rate them accordingly. In the last column are the odds against these standard hands in the ordinary game of poker.

	Patience values.	Poker odds.
1—One pair	2	13 to 10
2—Two pairs	5	20 to 1
3—Three of a kind	10	45 to 1
4—Straight	15	254 to 1
5—Flush	20	507 to 1
6—Full hand	25	693 to 1
7—Four of a kind	50	4,164 to 1
8—Straight flush	75	65,000 to 1
9—Royal flush	100	650,000 to 1

As an example of the manner in which a tableau is counted up and scored let us suppose this to be one which has been built up by a player:

S A	S 2	S 5	S 6	S 7
H 3	H 2	H 4	H 6	H 5
D J	D Q	D 4	D 6	S 9
H K	H 10	H 9	C J	C 7
C 10	H Q	D 9	C 6	H 7

It may be observed as an illustration of the play that the right hand end of the middle row horizontally was held open to the last, hoping for the seven, which would not only have completed the flush in diamonds but also have given the player four sevens vertically. The left hand end of the fourth horizontal was also kept open as long as possible, hoping to get an eight to make a straight, but the king of hearts had to be placed somewhere. The bottom line was the trash file, the queen spoiling any chance for a straight there.

If we count this tableau, beginning at the top line, horizontally, we have a flush, 20; then a straight flush, 75—95 altogether so far—then nothing three times. Vertically we have nothing for the first row, then two pairs, 5; total now 100; two more pairs, 105; then four of a kind, worth 50, total, 155; then three of a kind, 10; grand total, 165, which is a big hand.

It should be observed that it does not matter in what order the cards lie to make the straights so the five necessary are in that row. Thus in the example the second horizontal is a straight flush, although the actual order of the cards is 3, 2, 4, 6, 5. The diagonals do not count for anything. If the first hand mentioned is counted up it will be found that its four royal flushes, one straight flush and five fours of a kind will be worth 725 points, which is the highest possible count.

This is a very good game for two persons, each taking it in turn to call. For larger numbers it has the great recommendation that the betting element is superfluous. In that respect it seems to have solved the one great objection to the national game, which has always been that one could not play it without gambling at the same time.

A CITRUS BELT FAIR.

Warship of Oranges in a Sea of Lemons One Exhibit.

EXETER, Cal., Dec. 5.—The Sierras are covered with snow, yet down here in the little village at their base children are running to and fro, bareheaded, some barefooted and many without coats. All the town is full of excitement over the citrus fair which opened this week.

Those who live outside the citrus belt are apt to know very little about the magnitude of this industry, or the excellence of the fruit grown along the foothills; in fact they know little about the wonderful peaches, grapes, prunes, plums, also produced here. This fair is a revelation to Eastern visitors.

The electric car barns are being used for the fair. Inside the golden orange, the lemon and the pomelo are arranged in artistic designs. As you enter you see first a ladies' rest room with a wonderful portière of cover drapery, the tassels made of acorns. Another is of eucalyptus buds and beads.

The county Board of Trade's exhibit shows jars of preserved fruits of every variety save the citrus. There are potatoes a foot long, tremendous pears and peaches and an enormous bunch of grapes. The next booth is Porterville's, a pagoda of oranges, lemons, tangerines and pomelos, the roof and border being entirely of oranges set in wire.

Then comes Lindsay with a giant horn of plenty reaching to the ceiling, made all of oranges and pouring out a bountiful and beautiful display of citrus fruit. Then comes the exhibit of fruit of special excellence entered for prizes.

In the home exhibit besides the gorgeous citrus display are fresh strawberries, grown here out of doors; apples, persimmons, grapes and a pumpkin weighing 160 pounds—not so wonderful a pumpkin here, as the pumpkins all look like Cinderella's coach.

The stage is trimmed in orange color like everything else with the green and white background. The whole little town is dressed in gala attire in these same colors. The next exhibit is from the hillside town of Three Rivers, which sends many deciduous fruits and specimens of gold quartz.

The most original exhibit is from Lemon Cove—a warship made of oranges sailing on a sea of greenish lemons, in the rear a lighthouse of oranges, with breakers of green lemons dashing about its foundations.

The chrysanthemums and roses are beautiful and are of outdoor growth. The homemade jellies, pies, cakes, &c., make one think of mother and even grandmother. Outside the machinery is displayed under tents. There are all the usual features of fairs, popcorn and peanut venders, moving pictures, shooting galleries, a merry go round and even a camp of dirty fortune telling gypsies.

MARCH OF THE ITALIAN CHEF

IN NEW YORK HE OCCUPIES A FIELD OF HIS OWN.

Cooks Certain Dishes Better Than Any One Else and His Prices Are Lower —So the Number of Italian Restaurants Grows—Their Limitations.

The façade of a popular restaurant in the Great White Way has recently undergone a change. The former title of the place suggested goulash and paprika schnitzels. Now there is a Milanese softness to its name and a promise of the delights of spaghetti with meat sauce and minestrone. In other words, the Italian cuisine has advanced one step further in its conquest of New York.

The Hungarian establishment had made a clientele for itself among those who liked, or at all events were compelled on account of the cost, to eat of plentiful and highly flavored rather than delicate dishes. Yet the prevailing taste for Italian dishes was too strong for it to maintain independence, so there is one more Italian restaurant in New York.

New York does not yet possess an Italian restaurant of the first class and probably never will, as the expensive restaurants in most of the Italian cities are rather French than national in character. New York's Italian restaurants are distinctly cheaper than the average in price, and to that characteristic much of their success is due.

Yet it is not certain that mere cheapness could have acquired for them their popularity. It is the excellent taste of the food in addition to its price that puts everybody on the side of the Italian cook when there is little money to be invested in a meal.

The cheapness of the Italian restaurants is one of the features of their present renaissance. The first Italian restaurant popular here always offered a table d'hôte at prices that ranged from $1 to $1.25. The average price of an Italian table d'hôte dinner to-day is half as much.

"I remember that in the early '80s," said the manager of one of the hotel restaurants, "the foremost of the Italian table d'hôte restaurants was run by a man named Martinelli, who had a large, old fashioned brownstone house on the north side of Union square and charged for his dinner $1 or $1.25.

"The most powerful rival of Martinelli in those days was Moretti, who had his place on the second floor of a house on Fourteenth street opposite Tammany Hall. He was primarily there to feed the Italian singers who were appearing at the Academy of Music.

"He gave large amounts of food, very well cooked, good in quality and always accompanied by a very fine risotto, which was about the best thing he turned out. Then he included good wine. There was little or no attention paid to service and the incidental features of the meal were not attractive.

"Yet so good was the food and so extremely generous the supply of it that for years he prospered. Later he moved uptown, met with failure there and was sent home by a committee of his friends, and when he came back from Italy to try it again he met with no success.

"He charged a dollar and sometimes added an extra quarter to that. He was not alone in failing to keep the Italian dinner up to that standard.

"Morello, one of his contemporaries, built a new place uptown and nobody would patronize it. The Italian dinner had distinctly passed out of the dollar class. There was plenty of room for it, but not at that price. That is paid nowadays for the French table d'hôte, but not for the Italian, which must be considered as standing on a cheaper basis."

It is not the Italian table d'hôte alone that has brought about the demand for Italian restaurants. In those downtown neighborhoods that assure them a distinctly Italian patronage the table d'hôte is unknown. Customers there order from the card.

The menus in the places about Grand and Broome streets and even up on Lafayette street offer a list of dishes not changed by the least intrusion of American ideas. Uptown there are dishes that are never put on the bills of fare for those who desire only Italian food, and they are necessary for the American patrons who hear that there is a good and cheap Italian restaurant and go there and demand after a short time dishes that were never heard of before on any part of the Italic peninsula.

"It always means the death of an Italian restaurant," said one proprietor, who still has patrons enough of his own nationality to be independent of his American customers, "to listen to the requests of those who want other food than that of which he makes a specialty.

"Somebody tells an American customer of my place, for instance, as being good and cheap. He comes, orders the Italian food and likes it and then comes more and more frequently. After a while he gets weary of Italian dishes and longs for something native.

"He wants the proprietor to put American dishes on the bill of fare, and if the proprietor has had less experience than I have in such matters he consents. It is more than probable that this dish will not be as good as an American cook would make it. After a few trials of this kind of food, which he had hoped would be as good and as cheap as the Italian dishes, the customer is disappointed and goes somewhere else.

"That is the reason why no Italian restaurant à la carte of the first class has ever been attempted here. Americans who are willing to pay large sums do not want exclusively Italian dishes. They insist upon having so many French and American things that the menu loses all national character.

"They go to an Italian restaurant, where the veal will be better than any they could find elsewhere in New York, and they will order chicken en casserole or sole au vin blanc. Or they will want a sirloin steak with mushrooms. Of course those are not the sort of dishes that Italian cooks can prepare.

"What the Italian restaurant does is to put the dishes that appeal to New York taste on the bill of fare of the table d'hôte. That suffices to please those who want something of the ordinary kind of food with a liberal allowance of what is peculiarly Italian. In that way they are pleased, while the uncompromising Italians are able to get what they want by ordering it.

"In that way the taste of all my patrons will be pleased and I will not lose the patronage of those customers who come here because they want Italian cooking good and cheap and then leave me because it is not possible to get American dishes on just the same terms."

Italian restaurants are able to give better return for the money than the other eating places of moderate price because they are accustomed to make their best dishes out of meats that are not the most expensive in this country. As an example of one of their best and cheapest courses one need only take minestrone, the popular Italian soup.

It is a rich brew filled with tomatoes, black beans, cabbage and herbs that are in combination extremely savory and filling. It may be had with macaroni in it or the small Italian paste.

Of course both spaghetti and macaroni are the cheapest articles of food that can be cooked, and whether they are served with meat sauce, a chopped up soupy compound with the meat cut very small, or with cheese or tomatoes, the manner of serving adds little to the cost.

In the selection of fish and meats it is the cheaper articles that are best served according to the Italian way. Fried flounder in the good Italian restaurants is a brown divinity in culinary art that could not be excelled anywhere. Devilfish, a popular fish in Italy but not eaten here to any extent, is deliciously prepared by the Italian cooks.

The meats are also of a kind for which the prices are low. The knowing person who goes to an Italian restaurant would never think of ordering beef or chicken. He can see from the prices asked that they make it impossible for the best article of that kind to be provided. In the markets the best beef and poultry cost prices that are impossible to the proprietor of a cheap restaurant of any character, French, Italian or even of the race that introduced chop suey.

Veal, lamb and good giblets are on the other hand much cheaper. These the Italian cooks prepare to perfection, and the results are so novel to the American that it seems as if a new meat had been discovered.

The leg of the veal, usually used for a soup bone, is delicious when it comes on the table as ossa boco. The leg is roasted, there is a suggestion of herbs and garlic and a sauce of brown butter over the risotto that accompanies it. Then there is the delicious marrow in the bone that has been opened in order that it may easily be eaten.

The veal cutlets, whether they are served à la Milanaise, with cèpes cut up over them and put into a sauce of butter and cheese, or with herbs, are superior to any that can be eaten at the best of the Fifth avenue restaurants.

Arostino, which means a little roast, is a slice of the veal served with the kidney embedded in it and cooked with thyme and a thick brown sauce covering it and a bed of risotto. Such a cut of veal is unknown to American butchers.

The kidneys au sauce Madère are made in accordance with an Italian formula and are remarkable from the fact that only very small kidneys are used and they are served with champignons of about the same size.

It is in such dishes as these that the Italian restaurants excel, and to them they owe their present popularity, for they alone are able to serve them with such excellence in cooking and at such prices.

Not only in New York city has the increase in these places been enormous. There are six Italian restaurants at Coney Island and two have recently been opened in Brooklyn.

TO TAX BRITISH BACHELORS.

It Is Alleged That He Does Not Pay His Share of Expenses.

There are strong reasons why in England renewed attention should be given to the subject of taxing bachelors, declares the *Westminster Review*. The most important is the crucial fact that the bachelor bears a most inadequate share of the public expenditure, local or national. The bachelor fraternity too has greatly increased in numbers. Lastly, there is the urgent need on the part of the State to tap new sources of revenue.

With regard to the increase in the number of bachelors the statistics available have not the merit of being quite up to date, but the annual report of the Registrar-General, issued a few weeks ago, recalled that in London in 1871 the proportion of bachelors in 1,000 males "aged 15 and upward" was 386. In 1901, however, the proportion had risen to 421. The figures for spinsters are in each case a little higher and, says the report, "the proportion for both bachelors and spinsters increased at all ages."

In the country as a whole—i. e., in the United Kingdom—the proportion of bachelors of 20 years and upward increased 20 to the thousand between 1891 and 1901. There can be little doubt that the augmentation continues.

It will probably be conceded that the continued increase in the number of single men that has been witnessed of late years is not at all a good sign, and gives cause for disquiet. From the point of view of the strength and security of the State bachelorhood has never been regarded with favor, either in the ancient or the modern world, and bachelors have not only been subjected to penalties but have been deprived of certain political rights.

In France, in 1795, the Convention passed a vote excluding bachelors from the Conseil des Anciens, which corresponded with the Senate of to-day. Our neighbors on the other side of the Channel have among them an influential society called the National Alliance for the Increase of the Population of France. It frequently deplores the increase in the number of bachelors, and urges the adoption of certain measures which would place more political power in the hands of married men with families. For instance, the alliance proposes that a double vote should be given to fathers of more than two children.

In England bachelors have from time to time when the nation's expenditures were above the normal been subjected to special taxation. In the reign of William III. the tax varied from one shilling to £12 10s., according to the bachelor's ability to pay. He had to pay from the age of 25. The impost was withdrawn in 1706. In 1785 bachelors' servants were taxed at a higher rate than other people's, Pitt being responsible for this discrimination. Five years later that statesman's graduated income tax scheme bore more heavily on single than on married men.

In order to show at a glance the advantageous position the bachelor has as compared with the married man in the matter of rates and taxes the following table may be given of the items in respect of which each has to pay. Both, for the purposes of the table, are credited with income tax, and it may be prefaced that the average number of persons in a family is five:

BACHELOR.	MARRIED MAN.
Income Tax.	Income Tax.
Indirect Taxation (for one person, himself).	Indirect Taxation (for five persons).
	Inhabited house duty
	Local Rates.

It is surely apparent that unmarried men do not bear their fair share of either the national or local burdens. How is the anomaly to be met? The most convenient way would be for the State to levy a special tax upon bachelors possessed of a certain income. The tax should be levied at the age of 25 or 30 and remain in force till 70 or 80.

As has been shown, there are precedents in England for such special taxation. Of the total sum obtained by the Government part should be allocated for local purposes in order to make good the shortcomings of bachelors in the matter of rates.

UMBRELLA SELLERS GET WET.

Behavior That Suggests a Lack of Confidence in Their Own Wares.

The men who peddle umbrellas along Park row on rainy days do not seem to have much confidence in the durability of the wares they sell. At any rate they don't use their own umbrellas.

The other day when the rain was coming down in torrents and every one was seeking a place of shelter two or three umbrella sellers were standing out in front of one of the newspaper offices offering to sell to those unfortunates who were caught in the rain without protection umbrellas for 50 cents each. Each of them had a large bundle of umbrellas under his arm, but not one of them had one of the umbrellas above his head to protect him from the rain. There they stood with the rain pouring down on them, drenching each to the skin, without protection of any sort, while they offered their umbrellas to other people for 50 cents apiece.

LONG LOST AMERICAN COINS

VARIETIES NOT BEFORE KNOWN TURN UP FOR SALE.

New Record Prices for the Issues of Private Mints—A Rare Ingot Made at Sacramento—Trade Dollar of 1884 Brings $280—Mormon Gold Coins.

A number of rare American coins, some of which never were heard of before, came into general notice in the last year and brought extraordinary premiums when offered for sale. When the catalogue of the coin collection of H. Osborne O'Hagen of London reached this country last summer American collectors were agreeably surprised to find in it a specimen of the very scarce ten dollar piece dated 1849 and issued by the Cincinnati Mining and Trading Company of California.

A specimen of this coin had not been offered for sale in years, and the O'Hagen piece brought more than $2,100 when sold at Sotheby's. The same coin was offered later at a sale in this country and brought $3,000, the record for all the coins struck by private persons in California.

The sale of this coin brought to light another specimen owned by a resident of Cincinnati, which was disposed of for a large sum to Virgil M. Brand of Chicago, the possessor of one of the largest coin collections in the world.

Altogether there are now four of these ten dollar gold pieces definitely located—two above mentioned, a specimen in the mint collection at Philadelphia and a fourth in the collection of Andrew M. Zabriskie of this city.

Another rarity to make its appearance for the first time at public sale was a five dollar gold piece struck in Colorado during the days of the Pike's Peak gold excitement. A firm of jewellers, J. J. Conway & Co., was responsible for the manufacture of this coin, and the plant was located in Georgia Gulch. The firm is supposed to have been established in business at Parkville, one of the mining camps that sprang up like magic in 1861. There is no way of finding out how many of these coins were struck, but they are now so rare that the many who make a specialty of the private coins struck in Colorado have doubted the existence of the Conway five dollar piece.

The coin brought $3,200 at a sale held in Philadelphia, the record premium for a coin issued by a private person in the United States.

The design is quite simple, on the obverse being the name of the firm, while the reverse shows a large figure "5" in the centre of the field, with the words, "Pike's Peak Five Dollars" around the border. There is only one other known specimen, which is in the collection of the Philadelphia mint.

Still a third piece of money, belonging to the same series of privately struck coins, to be sold this year was a golden ingot issued by the State Assayer of California, F. D. Kohler, in 1850. This proved to be a variety hitherto unknown, and had the value of $36.55 stamped upon its face.

It was customary in 1850 for the miners to take their raw gold to the State Assay Office, where for a nominal percentage it would be melted, refined and cast into ingots, with the value in dollars and cents stamped upon it by the assayer. These ingots then passed throughout California for all purposes of a regular currency.

The parent State Assay Office was situated in San Francisco, and the ingots manufactured by this office have been the only ones hitherto known, but the new variety shows the letters "SAC" on the obverse in addition to the usual inscriptions, indicating that it had been made at a branch of the State Assay Office, located at Sacramento, which operated for a number of months in 1850.

This piece had remained in the possession of a family, the head of which had been a Forty-niner, and the ingot was a part of the gold he had extracted from the gold bearing sands of the districts of Dutch Flats and Gold Run when those places were in the height of their career. This unique ingot went to the collection of Mr. Brand, who also owns an ingot of the San Francisco State Assay Office of the value of $45.34, for which he paid $1,050. The only other specimen known of this ingot money is a $50 piece in the mint collection of the San Francisco mint, although some years ago a State Assay Office ingot of the value of $40.07 was in the mint collection at Philadelphia, but was stolen when two thieves broke into one of the cabinets.

A specimen of the much talked of trade dollar of 1884 came into public notice for the first time this year. Although the regular issue of trade dollars had been discontinued in 1878, still proof specimens were made for collectors after that time. The trade dollars for circulation were all struck at the mints of San Francisco and Carson City from 1873 to 1878 inclusive. In 1879 the Philadelphia mint struck a limited number of proofs of these coins for collectors and this custom was followed until 1883. It was generally supposed that this represented the very last year of issue, but five specimens dated 1884 came from the collection of a Philadelphian this year. One of them was recently put up at the Green sale in Chicago and brought $280, the highest figure ever paid for a United States silver dollar of regular issue with the exception of those dated 1794 and 1804.

A silver coin whose existence has been regarded with a good deal of doubt came into the possession of H. O. Granberg of Oshkosh, Wis., this year. The coin is a half dollar of 1853 which does not show the arrow points at either side of the date nor the radiations on the reverse as borne by the other half dollars of the year.

The rare coin was struck at the New Orleans mint and bears the mint letter "O." It is the only specimen of which there is any record and is regarded as the rarest of the United States half dollars. Mr. Granberg also came into possession of what is said to be the finest specimen of the 1804 silver dollar in existence. The coin is as sharp in outline as if it had just come from the coining press.

For the first time in many years there was offered in 1908 a specimen of the five dollar gold piece of the Bechtler mint of North Carolina of the early '30s that weighed 150 grains. This coin is much different from the other varieties of the pieces of the same denomination struck at the plant of Christopher Bechtler. It brought $7°5 when offered for sale, this high premium bringing into the market several others, with the result that at least eight of these pieces are now definitely known.

Mr. Granberg this year came into ownership of two specimens of the Mormon ten dollar gold pieces issued in 1849 at Salt Lake City of different design. This denomination of the Utah coinage is so rare that the lists of private coins prepared some years ago by experts did not describe it. The ten dollar piece is similar in design to the other Mormon pieces of 1849, showing the familiar device of clasped hands, the all seeing eye and bishop's mitre.

That real rarities do not always bring high prices in proportion to the number of specimens in existence was proved this year by the premiums paid for several specimens of experimental coins issued at the United States mint. One of the rarest of the pattern dollars designed by Christian Gobrecht in the late '30s was offered at the Gschwend sale this year in this city. This was struck in copper and bore on the obverse the design of the seated figure of Liberty and the date 1839, while the reverse showed a large eagle in full flight in the centre of a plain field. The only other dollar of this series struck in 1839 showed twenty-six stars scattered about the eagle on the reverse. The coin, which is regarded as unique, brought only $49.

At the same sale a new series of experimental pieces of 1885 came to public notice for the first time. These consisted of four pieces of the denomination of dollar, half dollar, quarter dollar and dimes struck in aluminum from the regular dies of the United States coins of the year. Rare though this set undoubtedly was, but one other having been struck, the four pieces together brought only about $16.

A number of scarce Colonial coins were offered for sale during 1908 and brought prices which show that the interest of the twentieth century collector is not less than that of the old time collectors in this branch of American coin collecting. A silver shilling of Virginia dated 1774, of which but three specimens are known, was sold for $505 at a sale held in this city, although the last time the piece was offered—at the Bushnell sale in 1882—it brought but $105.

The record price of $275 was paid in 1908 for a specimen of the Connecticut copper threepence of 1737, made by Higley the blacksmith at Granby, Conn. This variety bore the inscription, "Value Me As You Please. I Cut My Way Through," and shows a broad axe and deer as the principal obverse and reverse designs.

THE MECHANICAL TOY VENDERS

Street Merchants Who Are Kept Busy by Their Wares and the Cops.

"How much are the bears?"

So a woman who had joined a ring of people standing around looking at the mechanical toys displayed by a street toy vender.

"Thirty-five cents," says the vender.

"Well, I'll take one," says the woman, and the vender hands her a bear in a pasteboard box.

Many sorts of mechanical toys he has here, a basketful of them, and a lot stacked up in pasteboard boxes alongside, while in front on the sidewalk he has a lot of them which he keeps all the time in motion; walking bears, automobiles, drummer boys, horses that walk on their hind legs, athletes that swing their arms with a lifelike motion, walking rabbits, and as fast as one runs down he winds it up and sets it going again.

If an automobile collides with something else and upsets he rights it again, and if one of the walking figures doesn't seem able to stand on its feet very well he picks it up and in a jiffy spreads its legs a little further apart so that it can walk all right; and with a dozen of these things going all at once on the sidewalk in front of him he keeps busy winding them up and handing them over to buyers and setting out new toys. There's always a ring of people around him, and occasionally somebody buys a toy, as for instance that woman who has just bought a bear.

Now another woman takes a fancy to the little drummer boy and she buys one, which the vender hands over to her from the pile in a pasteboard box. But this buyer wants to be sure. Maybe she has bought a mechanical toy in a box before and found when she had got it home that it wouldn't work. So when the vender hands her not the drummer boy from the sidewalk but one in a box she immediately says:

"Wind it up, please."

Silently he complies: in fact the vender seems never to speak, he's too busy. So now silently he takes the cover from the box and silently he winds the drummer boy up and it drums all right, and in a moment he puts him, still drumming, back in the box and hands it over to the woman and takes the money.

So the vender keeps very busy. Seemingly he has no chance to look out for anything else, but apparently there's somebody looking out for him.

Here comes a man quietly along the sidewalk to halt at the edge of the ring of people around the sidewalk toy vender and lay his hand on the shoulder of a boy standing looking at the figures and to say to him, not roughly but gently: "Move along, now," and the boy does move, and two or three others with him, and that makes a break in the ring.

In another moment another man comes along, this man a little more bustling in his manner though not loud talking, and he says to the people around: "Move along, now, the cop's coming."

The first man who started the boys away seemed to be a sort of scout or runner, a friend of the vender or working with him maybe, and it seemed as if the second man might be the vender's boss or partner, as perhaps he might have been the boss and partner of a string of sidewalk mechanical toy venders, for whom he was thus looking out, to see that they were not disturbed by the police, for if the cop came along and found a crowd big enough to obstruct the sidewalk he would make the vender move on and so lose valuable time and a good place.

At any rate half the crowd moved on, prompted apparently by a friendly feeling for the vender. The word "cop" may have started a few, but really they seemed to move, most of them, so that the vender wouldn't have to move.

WHAT IS A GOPHER?

The Correct Answer Depends on Where the Question Is Asked.

"If you should ask a man from the Illinois prairies what a gopher was," said a man who acted as though he had asked a man from Illinois prairies the question, "he would say a gopher was a gray squirrel that burrowed in the ground.

"If you should ask the same question of a man from prairies further west he'd say a gopher was a striped squirrel that lived in holes in the ground.

"A Missouri farmer, though, would declare to you, if you asked him, that a gopher was a mole footed brown rat that digs its way under the ground in that State.

"A man from Georgia would probably surprise you therefore when he assured you that a gopher was a snake familiar to everybody in that State, but not more perhaps than a Florida native would surprise you when he informed you that a gopher was a turtle.

"The funny part of the matter is that every one of those informants would be right in his view. A gopher is a gray squirrel that burrows, a striped squirrel that burrows, a rat that burrows, a snake that doesn't burrow and a turtle that does, just according to the locality. The most interesting of all these is the burrowing turtle.

"This turtle is a Florida institution. The Florida Cracker, and quite a good many Florida folks who hold themselves a good deal higher up than the Cracker, dote on the gopher and think it the finest thing in the edible line ever created.

"The gopher never leaves its burrow except to forage. If it can't get into a sweet potato patch it will graze on the wild grasses that abound in the localities where it lives.

"The burrow of this gopher is invariably shared by its occupant with a family of rattlesnakes or lizards. The gopher plainly delights in this deadly association, although it is itself as mild and harmless as a dove.

"No dweller in the same region with the Florida gopher ever goes abroad without a bag slung over his shoulder. This is to carry gophers home in, for he is pretty sure to come across them out foraging. The moment the gopher detects the approach of danger it shuts itself securely in its shell and the Cracker tumbles it into his bag.

"The gophers are likewise trapped by digging holes in the ground close to the entrance of the burrow and sinking a box or barrel into it. When the gopher comes out it tumbles into the trap and can't get out. These queer turtles often weigh as much as thirty pounds. They are of prodigious strength, a large specimen being able to rise on its legs with a man standing on its shell and walk under his weight."

MAN'S COAT FOR EVENING

MANY GARMENTS BESIDES THE HEAVY FUR LINED.

The Tuxedo Chesterfield With a Long Shawl Collar an Oddity of the Season —An Inverness Cloak of Unusual Design—The Return of the Raglan.

It is not taking too much for granted to say that if the average man were to consult only his own taste he would never appear in evening dress during the winter months except with a fur coat. They are the handsomest garments for evening wear, just as they are the most modish, and whatever the fur used in them they are likely to be the most becoming. They are seen at the opera whenever there is the least excuse supplied by the weather for such heavy overgarments.

In these days the tendency so far as protection is concerned is to under rather than to over dress, so there had to be other kinds of overcoats to take the place of the fur lined for evening wear. The fur trimmed coats worn this year are usually made of kersey, black in color if intended for evening wear, lined with mink and finished with a rolling sable collar. Sable cuffs are ornamental although they are not always used. Buttons are preferred to frogs and sometimes—especially when the collar is made of sable—there are peaks in place of the rolling collar which may not be so smart but have the advantage of turning up closely about the neck. The fur coat for evening wear falls to the shoe tops.

But there are novelties in the evening coat that may almost compensate for the lack of a fur coat. One of these is a so-called Tuxedo Chesterfield which suggests in some of its features a comfortable dressing gown. Its most salient point is a low rolled shawl collar that extends to a point about midway between neck and waist. This shawl collar is not less than three and a half inches broad at its widest point and slopes to a width of half an inch at the bottom. This collar is more conspicuous from the fact that it is made of ribbed silk; but as the great claim to consideration for this coat is the fact that it is something different, such emphasis was inevitable.

The material is a black wool and the coat falls to the top of the shoe. It has a breast pocket finished without a flap, side pockets of vertical position, heavily welted and a long fly that extends from the bottom of the shawl collar to the bottom of the coat in front. Such a coat provides of course no substitute for a fur lined garment as it is not made heavy enough to keep a man warm especially as evening clothes are for one reason or another always lighter than other garments.

Then there is a new modification of the Inverness which is certain to appeal to those who are interested chiefly in getting something different. The Inverness in its old form of the cloak over the shoulders united to the coat from that point down, had a revival of popularity several years ago; and there was much more excuse for that established style than for the variation put forward this winter. It is a long cloak that falls to the knees. The high turnover collar of the black cloth reaches to the chin and behind a muffler protects the collar completely. Four buttons which come through the cloth are down the front. There are vertical openings on each side for the arms and these are closed by flaps that are provided with holes for the large buttons. The cloak is finished down the front as well as about the bottom and around the collar with a broad overstitching much better suited to a rough garment for sporting wear or travel than for such evening dress as its designer intended it for.

The great advantage of this new cloak is the ease with which one may drop it off in the theatre or at the opera. It is lined with heavy black satin, which offers a strange contrast to the rough finish of the coat. The buttons are not of silk or cloth, but black bone, and here again is the note of inappropriate contrast between its purpose and the means. These are days, however, in which it is more important to many people to be differently rather than to be tastefully dressed, and designers must keep that public in mind. This garment, as a matter of fact, is a compromise between a military garment and a Scotch shooting cloak.

The raglan was always a popular coat. It went so completely out of fashion that it was almost impossible to buy one of them anywhere a few years ago. Now the coat is appearing again in a style intended solely for evening wear. Why the raglan should have been thought especially appropriate for evening wear it is not easy to see except that it is an easy coat to slip off, and there is less danger of slipping the tie off and perhaps the dress coat as well along with it. The raglan in its present incarnation has not escaped the present tendency to paint the sartorial lily. It has received in its passage back to modishness a strap that buttons about the sleeve, pronounced peaks at the collar lapels, a welt finish on the patch pockets, and with flaps that turn both in and out at the desire of the wearer. These coats have the most distinctive raglan touch in the seam on the chest several inches below the shoulder, and of course the absolutely soft shoulder without padding of any kind.

The revival of the raglan, which may be expected also in overcoats for daytime wear next winter, is a revolt against the excessive shoulder padding of the last few years, and means that the artificial extended shoulder will not only be reduced to its natural proportions by the abandonment of all padding but will also be made to look still narrower by the rounded shoulder. These raglans for evening wear are made of black goods of smooth finish, with a pattern—either stripe or check—in the same color. They are lined with thin silk and are as a rule too light for evening wear except on the mildest winter nights.

The evening dress raglan is differentiated from the others in that it is much fuller and roomier. The breast and width measurement are equal to those of the Inverness, and that amounts almost to the freedom of a cloak. There is a seam in the back with a long vent. There is a velvet collar to this evening raglan, and this is another point in which it differs from any coats of the kind made before. It falls well to a point between the ankle and the knee.

Similar to a Chesterfield in its lines, but lengthened to the proper extent to protect the wearer, is a new coat intended for evening dress. It is of woollen cloth, usually of soft finish, black of course, and may have an invisible pattern. The broad lapels are faced with satin down to the edge and there are flaps over the two hip pockets. The fly hides the buttons in front and the back falls straight from the shoulders, with little deference to the lines of the figure.

STEAM HELPS THE HORSES.

A Tow for Teams Hauling Dirt Out of the Excavation for a Skyscraper.

A few doors east of Broadway on Reade street and extending through to Chambers street an excavation is being dug out for a new skyscraper. The contractors are down 30 feet and in order to cart the rock and dirt out they have combined horse and steam power.

A steep roadway made of wooden planks leads into the excavation. The grade is too great for the teams unassisted. The problem thus presented was solved by bringing one of the steam derrick engines into play.

The engine has been put up on the street and a steel cable fastened to the hoisting drum. The cable is hooked to the rear of a wagon descending into the excavation, and slowly the wagon travels down the roadway. Coming up the hook is attached to the shafts and with the aid of horses and power the wagon easily rolls up the incline.